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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRETORIA 000995

SIPDIS

AF FOR A/S JOHNNIE CARSON

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TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [SF](#)

SUBJECT: SWAZI KING CONVEYS REGIONAL POSITION ON MADAGASCAR  
TO A/S CARSON

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Classified By: Charg d'Affaires Helen LaLime for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: King Mswati III of Swaziland met with Assistant Secretary Johnnie Carson in Johannesburg, South Africa following the inauguration of Jacob Zuma as South Africa's fourth democratically elected president. He raised SADC's concerns regarding the crisis in Madagascar and the region's desire to restore that country to constitutional democracy. He asked that the USG participate with the region and the international community to find a solution to this problem. Carson noted that it was important to restore Madagascar's democracy, but cautioned that "SADC's approach might not be the best solution." End Summary.

¶2. (C) On May 10, 2009, King Mswati III of Swaziland met with A/S for African Affairs Johnnie Carson to discuss the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) concerns and position on the situation in Madagascar. Accompanying A/S Carson were U.S. Ambassador to Swaziland Maurice Parker and Pretoria PolCouns Raymond L. Brown. Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland Minister of Foreign Affairs Lutfo Dlamini was also present. King Mswati opened his remarks by thanking the USG for all the "good things" done in the bilateral relationship, including AGOA and trade support and the First Ladies PEPFAR Summit, as examples of building a strong bilateral partnership. Noting his keen personal interest in strengthening the bilateral relationship, King Mswati noted continuing challenges facing Swaziland, such as the problem of unemployment, the need to develop new industries in Swaziland, and his desire to see cooperation with the U.S. regarding direct foreign investment. He noted that his focus on the ongoing international financial crisis requires Swaziland to "put its eggs in different baskets." He invited Carson to come to Swaziland and see it for himself, to which Carson replied he had made many trips to Swaziland in the past and looks forward to future visits to reacquaint himself with that country.

¶3. (C) King Mswati then said that there have been a number of conflicts in the region causing set-backs for SADC programs and progress. He said the leaders of the region were pursuing lasting solutions to these conflicts via dialogue,

negotiations, and the institutionalization of democracy and constitutionalism. Madagascar was "going well," he said, and "suddenly we have this problem." SADC's rules and regulations

-- that no member state can come to power by undemocratic and unconstitutional means -- "must be respected," he insisted.

In this sense, "the constitution of Madagascar must be followed."

As SADC chair of the Organ on Security, Politics, and Peace King

Mswati convened an extraordinary summit whose April 30, 2009 communiqu  contained resolutions that Rajoelina's de facto position as Madagascar's new President "will not be accepted by SADC." He confided that SADC is seeking consensus

with the U.S., the African Union (AU), and the UN as the international community "must find a solution to Madagascar."

14. (C) King Mswati declared that Ravalomanana "is the president" of Madagascar, and "if they have something against him, they must use the constitution to deal with him...They did not do this beforehand." Early elections was one proposal under consideration -- and electoral referendums to resolve difficult political leadership problems is a new approach that Africa needs to employ to deal with unconstitutional regime change. Because Ravalomanana was forced to resign under duress, the King appealed to the POTUS via A/S Carson to "support SADC in this process." He continued by saying that SADC, the AU and the UN are working together on this crisis, and he wants the USG to voluntarily join this effort. The "message to Madagascar" from King Mswati was conveyed to A/S Carson -- "...if we

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cannot pave the way for Ravalomanana to return to power and encourage local troops to ensure his safety," then SADC is prepared to consider "other means." Mswati lamented that there had been four coups in Africa in the last seven months. This, he said, was "unacceptable." He said, "We need Ravalomanana back, alive, and also bold."

15. (C) A/S Carson said he had heard the King's message clearly and applauded the King's role within SADC to find a solution to the Madagascar crisis. He said it was very important to restore Madagascar's democracy, but cautioned that "SADC's approach might not be the best solution." A/S Carson urged King Mswati to consider a transitional framework like the one being proposed "in the transitional charter" supported by the UN special representative on Madagascar. A/S Carson said that the proposed transition charter would prohibit all of Madagascar's past presidents from running for office, as well as the senior government officials who administer the next elections. A/S Carson said SADC, the AU, and the U.S. need to work together to break the cycle of coups d'etat and reinforce the constitutional democracy of SADC member states.

16. (C) Foreign Minister Dlamini informed A/S Carson that he would lead a Swaziland/SADC delegation to Washington, D.C. around May 15, to discuss the way forward on Madagascar. Carson responded positively by welcoming this delegation and arranging appropriate calls on USG agencies concerned with these matters.

17. (C) Following the A/S Carson/King Mswati meeting, the King requested that Ambassador Parker remain behind. During that meeting, the Ambassador reinforced A/S Carson's statements. He

reminded  
the King of the visit of AFRICOM Commanding General William  
"Kip"  
Ward to Swaziland on May 13, where they could discuss SADC  
related  
military matters. The King was appreciative, stated that he  
looks  
forward to his meeting with the General, and noted that the  
meetings  
he is having with A/S Carson and General Ward would be  
sufficient.  
On May 12, FM Dlamini informed Ambassador Parker that his  
proposed  
visit to Washington had been postponed.

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